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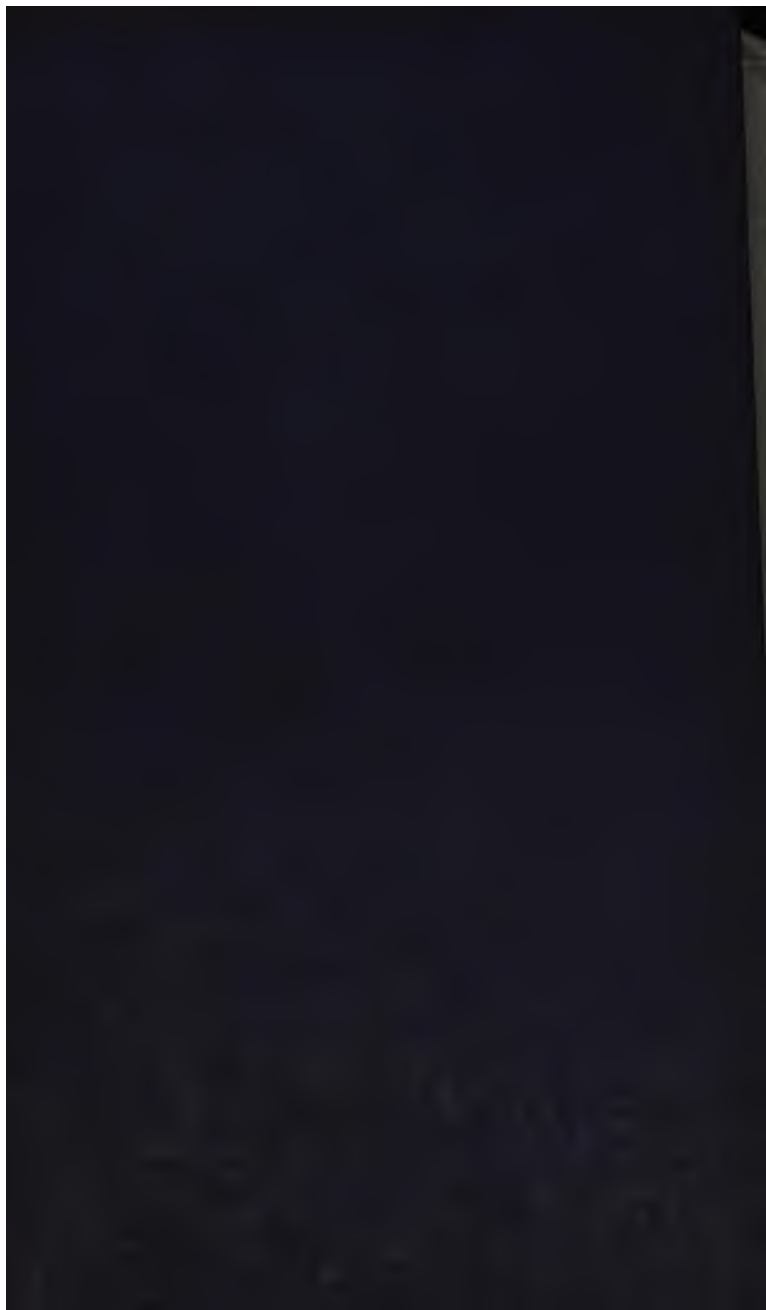
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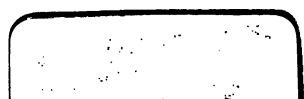
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THE  
INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL PROBLEM  
OF  
GOETHE'S FAUST

*PARTS I. AND II.*

BY

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## PREFACE.

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AFTER having lectured on Goethe's "Faust" three times in this country, some of my English friends encouraged me to write down the outline of these lectures in English. Before doing so I have read B. Taylor's translation of Goethe's "Faust," and all that Lewes, and especially Boyesen, say of it in their lives of Goethe. Wherever I found a happy expression of my own thought I accepted it, rather than to abuse, like Dr. Caius ("Merry Wives of Windsor"), "God's patience and your Queen's English." The *development of the leading thought* is my own; unless Goethe's words were to be applied specially to the explanation of his "Faust."

"Who can think wise or stupid things at all,  
That were not thought already in the past?"

After all that has been written on Goethe's "Faust," every new essay on it cannot but be

in some measure a compilation or echo of thoughts and opinions already enunciated elsewhere. The only pretension I had in writing down this paper was to give my friends *my* conception of the grand problem the eternal poem tries to solve.

A. W.

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PART I.

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*Goethe's Faust is the result of nearly sixty years'  
arduous labour.*

THE DEDICATION

reflects the feeling with which the poet (about 1779) once more approached the work of his youth. Twenty-four years had elapsed since it first engaged his attention; the once dim forms—the characters of the play—thrill him with new passion. The friends and first love who inspired him, and listened to his song in those early days, were now dead or scattered; but their forms, rising again in his memory, and with them the olden times, help him to gulf over the hard

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present, and inspire his stern heart once more to pour out his tuneful grief among a generation new and strange to him.

### THE PRELUDE ON THE STAGE

expresses the difficulties Goethe had to overcome in transforming the old Faust legend, the chief interest of which lay in Faust being fetched by the devil, into the greatest poem of modern times, in order to reconcile the claims of the manager, who thinks of his receipts, of the public, who wants amusement, with the highest aspiration of the poet, who thinks of future fame. By infusing his lifelong personal experience into the mould of the old Faust fable, Goethe made his poem a mirror of the eternal problem of our intellectual and moral being; by framing it in the lineaments of our social existence, he gives us a picture of a learned man's home and doings, of low and high life, of love, society, and government, of the development of the ideal, of the beautiful, of war, and beneficent unselfish activity.

Besides this, Goethe's "Faust" contains a

gigantic treasure of wisdom, partly in a very enigmatic form ; a philosophy of literature set in poetry, a depository of Goethe's opinions and criticism on histories, mythologies, philosophies, sciences, and national literatures. "Thus it appeals to all minds with the irresistible fascination of an eternal problem with the charms of endless variety," and with the power of rich knowledge.

For the comprehension of the poem, it is absolutely necessary to regard it, according to a letter, written by Goethe five days only before his death, March 17, 1832, to W. v. Humboldt, *as a whole, as a unit*, and to consider the composition of the poem as hinted at in the "Prologue in Heaven." It is based on the same supposition as the Book of Job—on a wager between God and Satan—whether the heroes will succumb, in Job to the *visitations*, in "Faust" to the *temptations*, by which Satan is allowed to ensnare them. Through the three first visitations—loss of his fortune, children, and health—Job bears up well ; in the fourth—his friends' reproachful assertions that his misfortunes are but chastise-



ments for his special sins—Job, afraid to be robbed of his last moral *hold*—his good conscience—is nearly driven to despair and blasphemies; but, throwing himself at last in the arms of the holy and just God, and appealing to His judgment, is declared by God (after a stern rebuke of his rash words of despair) right and his friends wrong. Satan has lost his wager, and Job is reinstated in his former happiness, although reminded that God's wisdom revealed in Nature must be to the sceptic and anxious mind a pledge of God's justice so often hidden in the dark mystery of the want of harmony between men's happiness and righteousness.

The *temptations* through which Faust has to go are also four, and correspond in great part with the temptations of our Lord—sensuality (make bread out of stones), frivolous distractions, splendour, and influence of high life; the fascination of possession and domination, augmented by the temptation, not known to the healthy mind of the ancient world, the temptation of being thoroughly and selfishly absorbed by the overwhelming power of the ideal beauty realized

in art and poetry. The purpose of the poem is to show how Faust goes through these temptations, and is rescued in the end, as God foretold, in the "Prologue in Heaven," when he says to the exulting Satan :

"A good man through obscurest aspirations,  
Has still an instinct of the one true way."

But while our Lord resists the temptations and declines to realize the grand mission of His life through the magic powers of sensuality, ambition, by yielding to popular instincts and prejudices, and prefers serving humanity to dominating it, and is therefore attended and served by angels, Faust, succumbing partly to the temptations, has first to go through a long process of intellectual and moral regeneration before angels, the symbols of God's saving love, attend him, proclaiming in tender tones his redemption.

---

Faust is the true type of humanity, with strong features of the German race, and specially of the German youth of the period of "Storm

and Stress" ("Sturm und Drang"), who were dreaming of something new, wonderful, never dreamed of before in the world, who despised the traditional doctrines of theology, law, and philosophy of their time; who fancied they were able to reconstruct on the ruins of the old bygone world the new ideal one out of their imaginary powers, and whose reveries ended in many cases in the utter ruin of the young Titans. Faust, a grey professor at a German university, not being able to get at the root of the mystery of the world by the dry abstractions and the formulas of the traditional science, is disgusted with his profession, and full of selfish and sensual ambition, has devoted himself to fantastical and mystical speculations, in order to explore "the fountains whence flows life throughout creation." But Faust must experience that the Earth Spirit, the personification of the life of Nature, and the moving power of history, not in its grand universal totality, but as far as revealed on this little atom of the world, the earth, God, the creator of earth and the judge in history, is too overpowering for the human mind to be

grasped by man's thought, and far too mighty to allow any man to puff himself up with the idea of being himself the very incarnation of the Earth Spirit.

“In the tides of Life, in action's storm,  
A fluctuant wave,  
A shuttle free,  
Birth and grave,  
An eternal sea,  
A weaving, flowing,  
Who, at Time's humming loom, is the hand  
that prepares  
The garment of life, which the Deity wears.”

In his new despair of ever knowing more than mere powerless forms and words, of which his friend and servant, Wagner, the type of a dull, self-satisfied learned pedant, is so proud, he resolves to commit suicide, but is prevented doing so by the melodious peal of the Easter bells, and the choral hymns in a neighbouring church, which awake in his breast the Christian reminiscences of his early happy and pious childhood, thus witnessing the saving power of a religion even where no longer believed.

“Those chants, to youth and all its sports appealing,  
Proclaimed the Spring's rejoicing holiday ;

And memory holds me now with childish feeling,  
 Back from the last, the solemn way.  
 Sound on ye hymns of heaven, so sweet and mild,  
 My tears gush forth : the earth takes back her child !”

Faust for a time feels happy and cheerful, he mixes again with the peasants and townspeople, and their gladness, never troubled by the great riddle of the world, in whose interpretation Faust has in vain wasted his days, imparts itself to the life-despairing man. He feels himself again a man, one of the common brotherhood—

“ Here is the people’s real heaven ;  
 Here low and high contented see ;  
 Here I am man—dare man to be !”

But the thanks he receives from an old man for his endeavours to rescue the townfolk, through his science, from the grasp of pestilence, call forth from him but a contemptuous remark on the uncertainty of medical art, and although he does advise the crowd to bow to Him above, “ who teaches help and succour sends,” he sinks back into his pessimistic mood—

“ O, happy he who still renews,  
 The hope from error’s depth to rise for ever !

That which one does not know, one needs to use ;  
And what one knows, one uses never."

The feeling of being unable to rise above earth's infirmities and fetters, the glowing wish to enjoy the world's grandeur and charms without binding himself to moral duties, the bitter sense of the duality of his nature, renew their power over his better self:—

"Two souls, alas ! reside within my breast,  
And each withdraws from, and repels, its brother.  
One with tenacious organs holds in love  
And clinging lust the world in its embraces ;  
The other strongly sweeps this dust above,  
Into the high ancestral spaces."

He appeals already to the airy spirits, if they really are between "Heaven and earth," to bear him forth to new and varied being, and retires somewhat cooled down into the solitude of his old *gothic chamber*, seeking relief and comfort in the old fountain of revelation—the Bible. But the negative powers of his mind begin to react, and the lower selfish passions, combined with the sharp critical tendency of his nature, begin to assert themselves, and take shape in a distinct poetical

character. *Mephisto* is simply man's bad sensuous, selfish nature, greed and lust, envy and hatred, combined with the power of dissecting and thus destroying all higher feeling and aspirations; he is not the Ahriman of the Persian mythology, nor the devil of the Middle Ages; he is, in a certain way, a servant of God according to the conception of the Book of Job, by never allowing men to be satisfied with what they have, and what they are, and thus urging them on to never quenched greed and ambition:—

“He is the spirit that denies!  
And justly so: for all things from the void  
Called forth, deserved to be destroyed:  
’Twere better, then, were nought created  
Thus, all which you as sin have rated—  
Destruction—ought with evil blent—  
That is my proper element.”

He is a part of darkness which brought forth the light, of the chaos out of which by the light the world was formed.

Mephisto tries first to act on Faust's pessimism, but Faust is still so much under the elevating spell of the Easter bells and Christian

reminiscences that, before he can succeed in overpowering him, he has to destroy these strong religious and moral foundations of his mind through sensuous visions, and the slow but surely destructive tooth of doubt ("a rat's quick tooth.")

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But soon the work is done; Faust falls a victim to his worse *alter ego*. Crushed by the contrast of his ambition and its results, embittered by the failures and disappointments of his life, he curses all attractions that bind him to life; he execrates the highest virtues—hope, faith and patience; in short, everything which from Death's dark threshold withhold his steps, and the last resisting power is annihilated, as the invisible spirits lament:

"Woe! woe! thou hast destroyed  
A beautiful world in thy despair;  
To the dark void the wreck we bear."

Mephisto suggests, that the best way to build up a new life is to renounce all philosophy, and to throw himself into sensual pleasures.



While Faust more deliberately renounces all hopes of his moral and intellectual nature, especially knowledge, the Will-o'-the-wisp, to which he has sacrificed happiness, the devil, undertakes to supply the want of them by such wretched excitements as a sensual life can afford. Faust, still too much a man of ideal tendencies and aspirations, denies flatly and scornfully that Mephisto by his power can ever give satisfaction to the soul of man. Disbelieving in happiness as he disbelieves in knowledge, therefore sure that the devil will never be able to redeem his bond, he offers him the following wager:—

“If ever you can charm me with any earthly pleasure so that I say to any present moment: ‘Stay, thou art so fair,’ then I yield myself up as your prisoner and slave, to suffer any doom that may be inflicted upon me.”

It is clearly to be understood that Faust does not offer his eternal life and freedom to the devil as equivalent for his services, *unconditionally*; he offers himself up as slave and prisoner, *but on condition*, that Mephisto will

grant him such pleasure, and such real happiness,  
as will satisfy entirely his whole being :—

“ When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,  
There let at once my record end !  
Canst thou with lying flattery rule me,  
Until self-pleased, myself I see—  
Canst thou with rich enjoyment fool me,  
Let that day be the last for me !  
Be this our wager !”

*Mephisto* : “ Done !”

*Faust* : ‘Tis ratified !

“ When thus I hail the moment flying :—  
“ Ah ! still delay—thou art so fair !”  
Then bind me in thy bonds undying,  
My final ruin then declare !  
Then let the death-bell chime the token,  
Then art thou from thy service free ;  
The clock may stop, the hand be broken,  
Then time be finished unto me !”

That means Faust binds himself to his lower nature, throwing himself headlong into the abyss of dissipation, hoping to get at the bottom of the world's mystery by a measureless enjoyment of its pleasure, enlarging his own self to the self of the whole of humanity :—

“ The thread of thought at last is broken,  
And knowledge brings disgust unspoken ;  
Let us the sensual deeps explore,  
To quench the fervours of glowing passion !

Let every marvel take form and fashion  
 Through the impervious veil it wore!  
 Plunge we in Time's tumultuous dance  
 In the rush and roll of circumstance!  
 Then may delight and distress,  
 And worry and success,  
 Alternately follow, as best they can:  
 Restless activity proves the man!  
 The aim I aim at is not joy,  
 I take the wildering whirl, enjoyment's keenest pain,  
 Enamoured hate, exhilarant disdain;  
 My bosom, of its thirst for knowledge sated,  
 Shall not, henceforth, from any pang be wrested,  
 And all of life for all mankind created,  
 Shall be within my inmost being tested,  
 The highest, lowest form my soul shall borrow,  
 Shall heap upon itself their bliss and sorrow,  
 And thus to theirs expand my individual mind,  
 And share at length the shipwreck of mankind."

Whilst Faust is preparing and dressing for his  
 new start in life, Mephisto exults over his sup-  
 posed victory, and exclaims:

"Reason and knowledge only thou despise,  
 The highest strength in man that lies,  
 Let but the lying spirit bind thee,  
 And I shall have thee fast and sure!  
 Dragged through the wildest life I will enslave him,  
 Through flat and stale indifference;  
 With struggling, chilling, checking, so deprave him  
 That, to his hot, insatiate sense,  
 The dream of drink shall mock, but never lave him!  
 Refreshment shall his lips in vain implore,

Had he not made himself the Devil's, naught could  
save him,  
Still were he lost for evermore."

The genius of negation puts on Faust's cap and gown, and befools a young fellow who comes for advice on the respective merits of the different branches of knowledge. Of logic, natural philosophy, and chemistry, Mephisto speaks contemptuously, and of metaphysics and theology he presents to the student not only grotesque caricatures, but the real pictures of these parts of knowledge in young Goethe's time. In a true Satanic mood of mind he recommends the study of medicine, not, however, for its merits as a science, but for its fascinating powers over women. The whole scene is a withering satire, and is meant to prepare us for the utter abjuration of theory, and the eager pursuit of enjoyment.

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In accordance with the compact, Mephisto takes Faust first to the humble "little world" of students, witches, and the jewel of this world, fascinating innocence, the fair and pure *Gretchen*.

The drinking, singing, quarrelling of the jovial and almost brutalized fellows in "*Auerbach's Cellar*," whom the generous gift of wine turns to a burning fire, is distasteful to Faust. A man of his stamp, even after having renounced the ideals of his life, is not prepared to lose himself in the degrading pool by which so many German geniuses were swallowed, he requires to be tempted by attractions somewhat more refined. "Let's hence! To leave them is my heart's desire," says Faust, contemptuously, in a sort of bewildered disgust.

Mephisto takes him to the "*Witches' Kitchen*," that is to say, to these places of vulgar sin where the mystery of love is prostituted to the service of degrading voluptuousness, the hollow world with its obscene talk, its games of hazard, its greed of money, this world of topsy-turvy morals, where all the principles of the ten commandments are turned upside down, where the holiest things are scoffed at, and the scandalous literature, whose authors have at least the merit of being "sincere (matter of fact) poets" (Zola) finds its models and admirers; the places where

the world and its transcendent charms, instead of being a mirror of the Creator's glory, turns to a snare and a lure for the weak mind. Faust is disgusted with these pictures of degrading and vulgar sin; but like many who go there only to look on, goes away with the devilish charm and fire in his veins, which compel him to see in each woman he meets a beauty like Helen. By desires hitherto unknown to him he feels young again, and youthful passions hurry him into the roaring flood of time. Faust is prepared to be the victim of the first temptation that Mephisto offers him, in the shape of fair innocent Gretchen (Daisy?). The simple girl, returning from church, is accosted by Faust in a way that proves the witches' draught had its effect, and earns him even from Mephisto's mouth the reproach of being a Jack "Rake" or a Frenchman, but soon this lovely girl, combining simplicity, homeliness, innocence with passion, witchery, a little vanity, a fascinating pertness of manner with a perfectly confiding nature, awakes for the first time in Faust's breast the sweet and purifying feeling of true love, and revives all the nobler aspirations of his youth.

Oh, welcome, twilight soft and sweet,  
 That breathes throughout this hallowed shrine !  
 Sweet pain of love, bind thou with fetters fleet,  
 The heart that on the dew of hope must pine !  
 How all around a sense impresses,  
 Of quiet, order, and content !  
 This poverty that bounty blesses,  
 What bliss within this narrow den is pent !  
 What sweetest thrill is in my blood !  
 Here could I spend whole hours, delaying :  
 Here Nature shaped, as if in sportive playing,  
 The angel blossom from the bud.  
 Here lay the child with life's warm essence,  
 The tender bosom filled and fair,  
 And here was wrought through holier, purer presence,  
 The form diviner beings wear !  
 And I ? What drew me here with power ?  
 How deeply am I moved this hour !  
 What seek I ? Why so full my heart and sore ?  
 Miserable Faust ! I know thee no more.  
 Is there a magic vapour here ?  
 I came with lust of instant pleasure,  
 And lie dissolved in dreams of love's sweet leisure !  
 Are we the sport of every changeeful atmosphere ?  
 And if, this moment, came she in to me,  
 How would I for the fault atonement render ?  
 How small the giant lout would be,  
 Prone at her feet, relaxed and tender !

He retires to *forest and cavern*, struggling to  
 subdue his wild passion, and to save himself and  
 Gretchen from a fall he knows would end all his  
 bliss and happiness. There alone, amid the

solitude of Nature, he pours out his rapture and his despair; love has cleared the eyes of his soul and Nature, which formerly impressed him as a wilderness of isolated and enigmatical phenomena, lies now revealed before him in her grand unity. He can now gaze into her bosom as into the bosom of a friend. He has detected the progressive development of all living beings (*Die Reibe der Lebendigen*), he sees his brothers in air, in water, and in the silent wood. But the very bliss of this new sensation fills him with abhorrence at the companion who fans within his breast a lawless fire unwearied for that fair and lovely form. He longs to be freed from contact with him :

“ Spirit sublime, thou gav’st me, gav’st me all  
For which I prayed. Not unto me in vain  
Hast thou thy countenance revealed in fire.  
Thou gav’st me Nature as a kingdom grand,  
With power to feel and enjoy it. Thou,  
Not only cold, amazed acquaintance yield’st  
But grantest, that in her profoundest breast  
I gaze, as in the bosom of a friend.  
The ranks of living creatures Thou dost lead  
Before me, teaching me to know my brothers  
In air and water and the silent wood.  
And when the storm in forests roars and grinds,



The giant firs, in falling, neighbour boughs  
 And neighbour trunks with crushing weight bear  
     down,  
 And falling, fill the hills with hollow thunders,—  
 Then to the cave secure thou leadest me,  
 Then show'st me mine own self, and in my breast  
 The deep mysterious miracles unfold.  
 And when the perfect moon before my gaze  
 Comes up with soothing light, around me float  
 From every precipice and thicket damp,  
 The silvery phantoms of the ages past,  
 And temper the austere delight of thought.  
 That nothing can be perfect unto man  
 I now am conscious. With this ecstasy,  
 Which brings me near and nearer to the gods,  
 Thou gav'st the comrade whom I now no more  
 Can do without, though cold and scornful he  
 Demeans me to myself, and with a breath,  
 A word, transforms Thy gifts to nothingness.  
 Within my breast he fans a lawless fire  
 Unwearied, for that fair and lovely form :  
 Thus in desire I hasten to enjoyment,  
 And in enjoyment pine to feel desire."

Mephisto, the cynical, selfish part of Faust,  
 scoffs at these sentiments as degrading a free  
 man ; in creating maidens and boys the Creator  
 himself has legitimated love. But this new ap-  
 peal to his sensuality does not move Faust. It  
 is not until Mephisto touches the tenderest chord  
 within Faust's breast by an appeal to his com-

passion with the poor deserted love that he reluctantly surrenders, and after a hard struggle between conscience and passion, rushing from desire to desire, although quite consciously, Faust yields :

“Thou, hell, hast claimed this sacrifice as thine!  
Help, devil! through the coming pangs to push me;  
What must be, let it quickly be!  
Let fall on me her fate and also crush me,  
One ruin overwhelm both her and me.”

Even the religious feelings expressed in the famous *confession of faith*—thoughts grander, deeper, are not to be found in poetry—cannot prevent him from falling and ruining poor and pure innocence.

“Hear me not falsely, sweetest child!  
Who dares name him  
And who proclaim? Him  
I believe!  
Who feeling, seeing,  
Deny his being!  
Saying: I believe him not?  
The all-enfolding  
The all-up holding,  
Folds and upholds he not  
Thee, me, himself?  
Arches not there the sky above us?  
Lies not beneath us firm the earth?”

And rise not on us shining  
 Friendly the everlasting stars?  
 Look I not eye to eye on thee,  
 And feel'st not thronging  
 To head and heart the force  
 Still weaving its eternal secret  
 Invisible, visible round thy life?  
 Vast as it is, fill with that force thy heart,  
 And when thou in the feeling wholly blessed art,  
 Call it then what thou wilt,  
 Call it Bliss, Heart, Love, God!  
 I have no name to give it!  
 Feeling is all in all,  
 The name is sound and smoke  
 Obscuring heaven's clear glow."

The want of moral strength shows itself by the fact that this beautiful confession of pantheistic faith is followed by the offer of a sleeping draught for Margaretha's mother, to seduce with more ease and facility the unprotected daughter.

Guileless innocence yields, and the *Scène at the Well*, where Margaret hears her friend Bessy triumph over the fall of one of their companions, proves that Margaret herself is no more pure. In the "*Prayer to the Virgin*," the Mother of Sorrow, she is already deserted by her seducer.

"Incline, O maiden,  
 Thou sorrow laden,

Thy gracious countenance upon my pain;  
The sword thy heart in  
With anguish smarting,  
Thou look'st up to where thy Son is slain.  
Help! rescue me from death and stain,  
O maiden,  
Thou sorrow laden,  
Incline thy countenance upon my pain."

Cursed by the brother dying under Faust's rapier, we see her in the *cathedral*, a prey to despair, overpowered by remorse, of which pangs the evil spirit is but the dreadful interpreter.

What change has taken place in Faust's mind is shown by the

### WALPURGIS-NIGHT

in Auerbach's cellar. Introduced to a scene of sensual revel, Faust had expressed his unfeigned disgust with the noisy roysterers. In the witches' kitchen his refined nature revolted from the loathsome sights and sounds in which Mephisto delighted. But now the constant companionship of Mephisto, the crimes which he has half involuntarily committed, have gradually accustomed him to the evil. Here in the *Walpurgis-Night* we see him for the first time sharing in Mephisto's

enjoyment, plunging in the maddening whirl of the witches, and committing excesses, which in his deeper being he despises. Faust is seeking to silence the warning voice of conscience, to drown the stormy memory which leaves him no peace; but in doing so he acquires the experience that in the world of sin, fancying we are pushing we are pushed, instead of freeing ourselves we are enslaved, instead of finding some solution of the problem of evil by revelling in it the problem grows darker, instead of finding companionship and comfort, we feel more isolated than ever.

Here amongst the nude young witches and the imbecile votaries of the senses, who are discontented with the world because they are no more able to enjoy, in this world of selfish and sensuous indulgence where no sound ambition stirs the slumbering remnant of human energy, Mephisto invites Faust to complete his ruin, and Faust accepts the invitation; but while he is dancing madly away with the young witch, a dread vision of Margaret with a bloody ring around her neck suddenly sobers him in the midst of his wild revels, and shows that Faust's conscience, which

he has sought to drown, is not dead. All the exertion of Mephisto to distract Faust's attention is in vain :

“Forsooth, the eyes they are of one whom dying,  
No hand with loving pressure closed ;  
That is the breast whereon I once was lying,  
The body sweet beside which I reposed.”

The devil, although he has succeeded in plunging him into crime and misery, has still failed to corrupt the innermost love of his being. His conscience is still wakeful, and generosity still stirs within him. He had fled from Margaret in consequence of having killed her brother, therefore, in order to save his own life, the vision of her, the offspring of his conscience, reveals to him the dreadful fate of Margaret ; he listens no more to the voice of either sensuality or of prudence—the vision drives him back to her whom he has ruined.

Seduction has led to infanticide, infanticide to the condemnation of Margaret. Faust knows that a triple murder lies at his door—Valentine's, of Marguerite's mother, and her child. Faust's conscience “in the tavern,” still a warning angel,

becomes now a revenging fury, whose voice he can quench only by cursing the one who led him from fall to fall, and by hurrying to the rescue of his victim (*see "Dreary Day"*).

Riding over a wild and dreary plain he is informed by the sound of carpenters at work on the gibbet of the preparations for the execution of Margaret.

Faust enters the dungeon where Margaret lies huddled on a bed of straw, singing wild snatches of old ballads, her reason gone, her end approaching. Faust has reached the goal for which he pined; he has heaped upon himself all the joy and sorrows of his kind; but by his reckless experiments with human passions he has become not only a seducer, but a murderer, and, worst of all, he has ruined the one life he really loved. The fact that Margaret has no word of reproach for him who threw her into the abyss of misery plunges him in deep grief, and unable to listen any longer to her innocent ravings, he entreats her to flight. But the prospect of flight reawakens in her the consciousness of guilt, and all his prayers and entreaties are in vain. Faust

then resolves to carry her away by force. The re-appearance of Mephisto gives to her resolution the violence of despair. She prefers dying and paying the penalty of her sin to being rescued by the one she hated from the beginning of her acquaintance with Faust ; she throws herself into the all-merciful God's arms, praying—

“Thine am I, Father ! rescue me  
You angels, holy cohorts guard me !  
Camp around, and from evil ward me !  
Henry ! I shudder to think of thee.”

And although Mephisto declares her “*judged*,” the angels’ voice from above “she is *saved*,” is but the echo of our own heart which, through her resolution rather to die than to be rescued by Mephisto’s help, is confirmed in its conviction that her only guilt was her innocence, that her guilt had never touched the core of her being, that at heart she was still good and pure.

Margaret’s voice anxiously calling after the fleeing Faust is a sign of tender solicitude for the fate of the man who has wrought her ruin, but whom she cannot cease to love, whom she hopes saved as well as herself, a sigh that is a token, a



pledge of that saving love, which from above will for ever follow him.

*This time Mephisto has triumphed over Faust ;* by the very power by which Faust will be saved at the end : by the "Eternally Womanly," by the all-uplifting and all-redeeming power of love, which this time in poor weak Margaret's shape has fascinated his soul ; *but Mephisto has not won his wager.* Faust's fiery spirit is unable to acquiesce in the enjoyment of a pleasure by which he has ruined the one he loved ; he has committed a heavy sin, his conscience is burdened with crushing guilt, but he is wiser than before, he knows that in selfish sensuality the absolute bliss for which he yearned is not to be found ; it is, on the contrary, the source of pain and regret. The God in Faust has not yet succumbed, the voice of conscience has not yet been silenced by the voice of passion, and his better nature will re-assert itself with renewed vigour. Mephisto has shown himself as "part of that power, which always wills the Bad and always works the Good."

## P A R T II.

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ACT I.

Faust, pursued by remorse, has retired again to the solitude of Nature. Many years have elapsed, and the healing influence of time and Nature, poetically symbolized by Ariel and a throng of airy elves, have obliterated not the memory of his guilt, "but the vain paralyzing remorse." But not only this: he has learned to limit his aspirations to the attainable; from the rising sun he learns that we can never look directly, face to face, at the eternal light, which is the fountain of life to the world; and as we can enjoy the sun's splendour only as reflected in Nature, so *we can get at the world's mystery only in its tinted reflex in life's courses.*

Faust is resolved to test, by an energetic application of all his powers, what it is that is really attainable to man:—

"Life's pulses now with fresher force awaken!  
Earth thou beginnest, all thy gladness granting,

### 34 INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL PROBLEM

A vigorous resolution to restore me,  
To seek that highest life for which I'm panting !  
The world unfolded lies in twilight glimmer,  
A thousand voices in the grove are chanting,  
Vale in, vale out, the misty streaks grow dimmer.  
The deeps with heavenly light are penetrated,  
The boughs refreshed lift up their leafy shimmer  
From gulfs of air where sleepily they waited ;  
Colour on colour from the back ground cleareth  
Where flower and leaf with trembling pearls are  
freighted ;  
And all around a paradise appeareth.

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Look up ! The mountain summits, grand supernal,  
Herald e'en now the solemn hour that neareth ;  
They earliest enjoy the light eternal  
That later sinks till here below we find it.  
Now to the Alpine meadows, sloping vernal,  
A newer beam descends ere we divine it,  
And step by step unto the base has bounded.  
The sun comes forth ! Alas ! already blinded,  
I turn away with eyesight pierced and wounded !  
'Tis thus when unto yearning hope's endeavour,  
Its highest wish on sweet attainment grounded,  
The portals of fulfilment widely sever ;  
But if there burst from those eternal spaces,  
A flood of flame, we stand confounded ever,  
For life's pure torch we sought the shining traces,  
And seas of fire—and what a fire !—surprise us.  
Is't love ? Is't hate ? that burningly embraces,  
And that with pain and joy alternate tries us ?  
So that our glances once more earthwards throwing,  
We seek in youthful drapery to disguise us.

Behind me, therefore, let the sun be glowing!  
The cataract between the crags deep-riven,  
I thus behold with rapture ever-growing,  
From plunge to plunge in thousand streams 'tis given,  
And yet a thousand, to the valleys shaded,  
While foam and spray in air are whirled and driven.  
Yes, how superb across the tumult braided  
The painted rainbow's changeful life is bending,  
Now clearly drawn, dissolving now and faded,  
And ever more the showers of dew descending.  
Of human striving there's no symbol fuller;  
Consider, and 'tis easy comprehending,  
Life is not light but the refracted colour."

With this resolution Faust enters upon the larger life, into which, according to the contract, Mephisto has to introduce him.

"The little world and then the great we'll see."

Faust is still an eudemonist, a man to whom enjoyment is the goal of life; but of a nobler type, and, as is frequently the case with a man who conscientiously labours for his own improvement, he gradually outgrows himself, and his eudemonism gives place to an exalted, unselfish enthusiasm for the welfare of humanity.

Mephisto, in the meanwhile, has prepared the way to the new and wider sphere of activity for which Faust is yearning: the Court of the

German Emperor. Mephisto has dexterously slipped into the vacant place of the Court fool, who had been carried away in an unconscious condition. The ruined and hopeless condition of the realm gives Mephisto the opportunity to propose a splendid remedy for the financial difficulty, based on all the hidden treasures, which, according to mediæval belief, lay buried in the earth, and to hint at a man endowed with "Mind's and Nature's" might, and therefore able to realize it.

While the preparations for the realization of the scheme are in progress, Mephisto introduces Faust, in the guise of the god Plutus, at a masquerade crowded with allegorical figures, representing in a mocking way Society and Government. The Ministers, dressed as gnomes, persuade the Emperor, who takes part in the masquerade as the great Pan, to sign a paper, by which, quite unconsciously, in the whirlwind of the festival, he signs a decree, creating paper money, a form of assignat pledging the State to the repayment of a sum of money, chargeable on the treasures underground, the custody of which is given to Faust and Mephisto.

The fire, which blazing out of the golden treasure in god Plutus' trunk, begins nearly to consume the Emperor and his shilly-shally attendants, is only the prophetic symbol of the inevitable result of the new financial scheme, the anarchy and revolution which will engulf this selfish, shallow, sensual society, where everything exists but for one and his creatures, and the most important things are done without regarding their consequence and effects on the whole nation.

After having been for the moment enriched, as France was made rich by Law's scheme, and England by the South Sea Bubble, the Emperor and his frivolous Court want to be amused by Faust's *artistic power and skill*; he wants to see Paris and Helena, the ideals of beauty of the ancient classic world. Mephisto's power, as the spirit of negation, does not extend to the realm of real beauty. In order to reproduce it, Faust himself must descend to the "Mothers," the secret creative powers of Nature, as they lay hidden in the artist's and poet's mind.

In every man slumbers more or less the eternal

idea of beauty, as the ancient Greek civilization has realized it in its immortal works of art and poetry ; but it is only the poet and artist himself who can, to the delight and astonishment of the world, reproduce it through his creative genius through an instinctive perception of Nature's own mysterious laws. Faust penetrates to Nature's heart in the depth of his own mind, and by concentrating his mind on the one point, summons up the external symbols of beauty. But whereas these are for the frivolous Court but the object of cynical remarks and shallow sensuous delight, Faust, intoxicated with ecstasy, and quite beside himself at the sight of the wondrous harmony of Helena's form; rushes forward to clasp her in his embrace. A terrible explosion follows, the spirits vanish in vapour, and Faust falls unconscious to the ground. "A sudden burst of passion will never lead to the attainment of the ideal;" it may for a moment appear like a flash of lightning to the genius yearning for it, but it can be realized in eternal works of art and poetry only by a gradual, orderly growth, by an harmonious development of all the powers of the intellect and heart.

Having once seen Helena, Faust can no more tarry at the imperial Court. The frivolous way in which wealth and ideal beauty are treated, tells him that such a world is doomed ; his life has henceforth a definite aim ; Faust is resolved to devote all his energies to the one purpose of gaining possession of Helena—that is, to realize in his life and writings the ideal spirit and beauty of the ancient Greek civilization.

Mephisto has again *lost his wager*, the high but frivolous culture and pleasure of the greater world, the splendours and flatteries of it, the star-bright meteors of ambition's heaven, by which Mephisto tried to ensnare him, have had no lasting power on Faust's mind, but the enjoyment of high life has shown him where the goal of his higher aspirations lies. With this moment begins the intellectual regeneration of Faust, and Mephisto has proved himself again a part of the power which ever wills the ill and ever works the good.

## ACT II.

Acts II. and III. are given not as pictures of Faust's actual life, but as an interlude, as something to be imagined, as a dream, as a fantastic





and symbolical representation of the intellectual and moral regeneration of Faust. Goethe, through his unremitting efforts to rise from a sensualist to a refined artist, from the rough "storm and stress" of his youth to the refined idealism of his classical period, and of his hard and incessant work to realize in his life and writings the ideal beauty of ancient art and poetry.

While Faust is sleeping on his old couch in his *Gothic mansion*, Mephisto befools again the young student of the first part, who returns to his old professor as an arrogant, self-confident bachelor of arts, to tell his old master that he is a conceited old fool. Leading the impudent young fellow on to ever greater paradoxes, he rejoices at the harvest his teachings have brought forth—a striking satire on "Fichte's transcendental philosophy," which attributing reality to the spirit alone, declares matter to be but a modification of the same, and denies it a positive existence besides and outside the thinking spirit. But Wagner, too, has not lost his time. Convinced of the omnipotence of science, and believing like his namesake, T. T. Wagner, Professor of Wurzburg

burg, 1775-1841, that organic chemistry must in time succeed in producing organic bodies and in fashioning men by crystallization, he is just gazing in breathless suspense at the retort, where his mixture is seething, evaporating, and assuming strange forms : he has succeeded in his enterprise, a small human being is the result. *Homunculus*, the offspring of a self-conceited but learned, hard-working German pedant, is nothing else than the *satirical embodiment of German learning*. This learning, as *solid philological knowledge* of the ancient classical world, has the incontestible merit of having disclosed to men like Goethe the antique ideal of classical beauty, but it had not the power within it of reproducing this ideal in writings or life ; this learning tried, therefore, to enlarge its power by devoting itself to *science in its narrower sense*, as chemistry, physics, geology, natural history ; but here again, fettered by its dogmatic propensities to the attempt to unravel the last mysteries of Nature by certain formulas—per instance, in Goethe's time by the supposition that either volcanic powers or Neptunic agencies have shaped the

actual surface of the earth, and in our time by the Darwinian hypothesis, which, according to German professors, is the key to unlock all the mysteries of creation—this learning, I say, *collapses* and *fails* whenever it has to do with the undefinable creative powers which the Greeks symbolically represented in their mythology.

Homunculus conducts Faust, and, much against his will, Mephisto too, to the *Classical Walpurgis Night*, where Faust's further progress toward the ideal of Greek beauty is symbolically represented. Faust, touching classical ground, awakes from his sleep, and his yearning for Helena reawakes with redoubled force. The three travellers resolve to follow each his own inclination; then in the classical world every one is pretty sure of finding what he seeks. *Faust* pursues Helena, and is from the beginning struck with the grand features even of the cruder creations of the Greek genius, whilst *Mephisto* sees only the monstrous and sensual part of them. Faust, asking after Helena, is advised to consult *Chiron*, the representative of the free arts, music, &c. Chiron carries him to the wise sibyl *Manto*, priestess of Apollo,

personifying prophetic poetic intuition, who shows him in her temple a descent to Hades, where, by the aid of Persephone, the goddess of the under world, he may succeed in finding and restoring Helena from the darkness to the upper world. We lose sight of Faust, his communion with Persephone—the grand mystery of creating the ideal beauty in art and poetry cannot be represented. “Isis is not to be unveiled to the vulgar crowd.”

In these symbols Goethe depicts to us Faust's and his own artistic regeneration from the passionate ferment of his early Gothic youth, from the “storm and stress” to the beautiful harmony of the mental and physical powers of his manhood, his earnest studies of Nature, out of which he drew the vital forces enabling him to realize in his “Iphigenia,” “Tasso,” and partly in “Faust” itself, the ideal Greek beauty in modern form and spirit. Goethe owns that he has been led by Homunculus, the embodiment of German classical knowledge and modern science, to Chiron—that is, to occupy himself with literature, drawing, the history of art, metrics,

geology, botany, anatomy, and optics, and through this to Manto, to recognizing poetry as the special gift by which *he* was to give life and shape to the ideal beauty revealed to him through German philology, living as a holy fire in his soul, and realized in his noblest works during his solitude in Italy, or his *gardenhouse* of Weimar.

In the meanwhile, *Mephisto*, gradually losing his power over Faust, has followed his own inclinations, but, instead of finding, like Faust, the ideal beauty, he reaches, true to his negative cynical character, the ideal of ugliness in the "Phorkyads," in whose mask he tries to get at Helena, and by winning her over to Faust, to re-assert his old power over Faust. Goethe, far from being of the stupid idea that every one has to be regenerated or "saved" in the same way he was himself, wishes to show and prove that the study of the classic world has not the same effect on every mind—it is a regenerating intellectual and moral power for the ideal mind,—for a low mind it is but a means to hide its own vulgar propensities, sensuousness, and selfishness under a classical mask.

Poor *Homunculus*, eager to enter upon real life, to change his artificial existence in his phial into a real one, such as Nature alone imparts, addresses himself to a Vulcanist, Anaxagoras, who pretends that the way of gaining existence is by fire, the fierce Plutonian fire, which, bursting earth's primeval crust, creates hills and mountains; but a meteor, which crushes the eulogist of this form of gaining existence, drives him into the arms of Thales, the representative of Neptunism, the theory that the earth's surface and shape is the result, not of Vulcanic, but of watery agencies, of the great sea. Thales brings *Homunculus* to a great festival of the sea-gods, where Proteus invites *Homunculus*,

“Who has no lack of qualities' ideal,  
But far too much of palpable and real,”

and therefore wishes eagerly to be a real being, to start a new life on the ocean's broad breast. Yes! cries Thales:

“At the source be thou created,  
Through thousand myriad forms ascending,  
Thou shalt attain in time to man.”

The ocean is source of origination, development, and preservation of life.

"From water was everything first created,  
 Water doth everything still sustain!  
 Ocean! grant us thy endless reign!  
 If the clouds thou wert sending not,  
 The swelling streams wert spending not,  
 The winding rivers bending not,  
 And all in thee were ending not,  
 Could mountains and plains and the world  
     itself be?  
 The freshest existence is nourished by thee!"

Yet Proteus warns Homunculus :

"But struggle not to higher orders!  
 Once man within the human borders,  
 Then all is at an end for thee."

Homunculus disappears on Proteus' back, prepared for the experiment of seeking life in the ocean, but misled by his imperious yearning to attain humanity, breaks the phial in which he lived since his birth—his artificial form of existence—he glows and flushes once more, and dies amidst the songs of syrens, who praise the four elements, and Eros, the god of love, as the rulers who all things began.

Goethe, a firm believer in law and orderly development, was opposed to those naturalists who, like A. von Humboldt, assign to fire, earthquake, and volcanoes, the principal agency in

fashioning the surface of earth, although ready to admit that these violent phenomena had a secondary or incidental effect upon the total result; the calm and beautiful regularity with which the water silently labours to fashion the rock, and to dissolve it into the elements in which vegetable life has its origin, was to him in deeper conformity with the temper of Nature, and thus Goethe seized the opportunity to mock at his scientific opponents, the volcanists; but the German professor, with his dogmatic tendencies, even in science is laughed at in poor Homunculus. Goethe was a Darwinist before Darwin; he proclaims the struggle for existence and the adaptation of species; but he believed still in the creative, in no formulas to be confined and through no formulas to be expressed, creative power of Nature, which the old Greeks represented in their mythological figures, gods and goddesses. There is the limit of the German professor's wisdom, and when he tries "to make" a man, or to understand the creation of man, without acknowledging the undefinable last cause of the world, he will be wrecked, like Homunculus, at Galatea's shell.



## ACT III.


Helena has been rescued from the under world, and Proserpina has allowed her to reappear with the illusion of returning from Troy with a number of Trojan captives to her home in Sparta, "the Palace of Menelaos." She arrives, with serious apprehension as to her fate. Entering the palace, she is horror-stricken at the sight of a spectre: it is Mephisto, under the mask of the Phorkyads, the ideals of female ugliness. Mephisto had nearly lost his power over Faust, who has separated himself from his bad companion, when searching after Helena, therefore he must try to ensnare him again by luring Helena into Faust's arms, and plunging him in another sea of enjoyment, although of a higher kind. Mephisto frightens Helena by saying it is her husband's intention to sacrifice her and her maidens to the gods as an expiation of her guilt, and offers to save her from Menelaos' savage jealousy. She, declaring herself to be not the unfaithful wife, but an innocent victim of her own beauty and fate, accepts his offer.

Mephisto creates out of arising mists the "*Gothic Castle*," in which Faust, in allusion to the fact that German princes conquered in 1204 the Peloponnesos, has his residence as the head of the heroic northern race and the different feudal principalities into which they divided the mountains of Arcadia. Faust receives Helena with a solemn welcome, in which the romantic idea of love (Minne) is strikingly reflected in its contrast to the unreflecting naïve sensuality of the Greek. Helena, conscious that the glory of the antique world is passed, fascinated by the homage she received, and by the sound of the new language softened by rhyme, feels her bosom enkindled with a strange delight: with love for Faust. Both unite their souls, not only by rhymes, but by matrimonial union. Helena gives up her whole being to him.

"Princely majesty denies not  
To itself the full revealing  
Of the fond heart's secret raptures,  
With the world around to witness."

The result of this symbolic union is *Euphorion*, a winged son of Faust and Helena. He is the genius of modern poetry in its most finished

form : romantic passion, clad in the perfection of classical beauty, as we see it according to Goethe's judgment realized in Byron. With his lyre in his hand he rises, singing, from the earth, and the parents, full of anxiety and delight, listen to the strange, full-sounding, heart-moving tones of his voice. After a mad pursuit of the maidens of the chorus, he climbs upwards from mountain crag to crag until he reaches the highest peak of the Peloponnesos, whence surveying the whole fair land of Greece, and in allusion to Byron, who, from a fortunate conqueror of woman's heart, became the poet and champion of Grecian freedom, sings of war and victory and the hero's glory. At last he throws himself into the air, his garments bear him up for a moment, but soon a beautiful youth falls at the feet of his parents. The chorus sings a wonderful dirge, a lament for Lord Byron, commemorating his life and death. Helena follows her child into the realm of the shades. Faust, who strives to hold her fast in his arms, sees her vanish, only her veil and her garment are left to him as of priceless worth.



“Hold fast what now alone remains to thee!  
It is no more the Goddess thou hast lost,  
But god-like is it. For thy use employ  
The grand and priceless gift, and soar aloft,  
’Twill bear thee swift from all things mean and low  
To ether high, so long thou canst endure.”

The meaning of these words is this. The real animating spirit of the Greek civilization which Faust-Goethe had reconquered could not abide with him long; only in the most inspired moments of his creative period he was in full possession of the lovely goddess; but the veil through which she—the ideal beauty of classical Greece—shimmered forth, her garment, the classical form which is bequeathed to us in the sculpture and literature of the Greek—these we may still retain and adapt to new uses, breathing into them the new spirit of modern Germanic civilization. Even though we possess no more the goddess herself, the noble classical form, which we may renew as Goethe did in “Iphigenia,” “Tasso,” and partly in “Faust,” is yet god-like, and lifted him above the meanness and misery of the petty and reactionary period in which he lived, and will lift into a nobler sphere of being

every one who will worthily strive for its possession. Whilst Helena's garment dissolves into a cloud, surrounding Faust and carrying him off from the fairy land of fancy back to the real world, Mephisto takes up Euphorion's mantle and lyre and says :

“ Enough remains to start the poets living,  
And envy in their guilds to send ;  
And if their talents are beyond my giving  
At least the costume I can lend.”

Panthalis, the leader of the chorus, orders the maidens to go down to Hades, following the track of Helena ; but they refuse to do so, as the only amusement awaiting them there is

“ Bat-like to squeak and twitter,  
In whispers mockery and ghostly.”

Panthalis confirms her fears—

“ Who has not won a name and seeks not noble works  
Belongs but to the elements : away then, ye !  
My own intense desire is with my queen to be ;  
Service and faith secure the individual life.”

Panthalis descends to the world of shades, the maidens, after having described their future life as Dryads, Echoes, Naiads and Menads, dissolve to elementary spirits of Nature. Phorkyas, throwing off mask and veil, shows herself as Mephisto, and follows Faust back to Germany.

Art and poetry are to the active man, in the strength of manhood, not the last goal of his aspirations, but an educational means of raising him from the æsthetic—that is, a still sensuous world into the spiritual world of moral feeling and action.

The pursuit of art and poetry has, specially in petty and reactionary times, in times of national decline and political debasement, the great danger of thoroughly absorbing the most ideal minds of the nation, so that they do not take the least interest in the great questions of their own country, but lose themselves often most wantonly and selfishly in the enjoyment of the most refined, artistic, and poetical sensuousness, as depicted by Goethe himself.

“Near and nearer already sit  
They, to each other drawn,  
Shoulder to shoulder, knee to knee,  
Hand in hand.  
Majesty here not withholds its  
Secretest raptures,  
Wilfully, boldly revealed  
Thus to the eyes of the people.”

A danger to which many historians reproach Goethe with having succumbed to, especially in the great war of emancipation from Napoleon the

First's yoke. But Goethe not only refutes this reproach in proving how Faust-Goethe, by his union with Helena, is inspired to manly and useful enterprise—

“’Tis plain to see  
That heroines have been thy company—”

but by acknowledging that art and poetry, without practical and moral purpose, are only a dangerous plaything for weak minds, yea, by hinting at the fact that modern art and poetry in their highest perfection and realization in Byron are, although an elevating inspiring power, yet not a moral one, not a prop in life and death.

Art and poetry secure individual life only to the genial, strong, independent individualities who have become, as Goethe says, “entelechies,” actual distinctive beings with creative powers, by which they impress the footprints of their life even in history’s moving sands, “who have won a name;” while the moral world promises individual life also to “merit and faith.” Goethe said in 1829 to Eckermann, “I do not doubt our permanent existence, for Nature can-*not do without* the ‘entelechies.’” But we are

not all immortal in the same fashion; and in order to manifest one's self in the future life as a great "entelechie," as an actual distinctive being, one must first become one in this life.

The same surmises in regard to a future life we find in a letter written by Goethe's friend, W. von Humboldt, in 1830, to Frau von Wolzogen. "There is a spiritual individuality, but not every one attains it. As a peculiar distinctive form of mind it is eternal and immutable. Whatever cannot thus individually shape itself may return into the universal life of Nature—will continue to exist only in the elements."

#### ACT IV.

Faust, in retiring into Nature's solitude, had found healing for his heart's wounds, and had been regenerated through his constant study of the classical world, and the unremitting efforts to realize its ideals in his own works and life; but his aesthetic delights had yielded him no enduring satisfaction—the ideal, in the possession of which he had hoped to find absolute happiness, had fled from him. *"To the active man, in the strength of his manhood, the pursuit*



*of the beautiful is not a final goal, but an educational process."*

To utilize the result of his æsthetic education, Faust is transferred again to his native soil, where a new sphere of activity is to unfold before him. This is strikingly symbolized by the fact that Helena's garment carries him back to Germany.

He feels himself a member of the great human family, and yearns to apply the rich experience which he has gained in practical pursuits for the amelioration of the lot of his suffering fellow-creatures; as once he rose from the sensual into the æsthetic world, he now rises from the latter into the world of moral feeling and action.

The cloud having deposited Faust on one of the mountains of Germany, assumes, while dissolving, the form of a woman, closely resembling her whom he has lately lost, the embodiment of the joys of his youth, to which he must now bid farewell, but which reminding him of his first love (Gretchen) will for ever draw him upward and onward. The devil, just arriving from the æsthetic fairy land, feels that

his victim is growing beyond his reach. After a discussion, which is a new satirical outburst of Goethe's antipathy against the Vulcanists, Mephisto tries dexterously, in allusion to the last temptation of our Lord (Matt. iv. 8-9,) to allure him by visions of political power, worldly glory, and princely opportunities for sensual indulgence and ease, but Faust is past this temptation : he is no longer the eudemonist. "Enjoyment debases, indulgence degrades," is his principle. Mephisto scoffs at him, hinting at his being moon-struck in consequence of having on his passage come too near the moon. Faust answers, with a lofty consciousness of his strength—

"Not so! This sphere of earthly soil,  
Still gives us room for lofty doing;  
Astounding plans e'en now are brewing :  
I feel new strength for bolder toil."

His aim is to bend Nature to the service of men, to bar the ocean from a great stretch of submerged land, and thus conquer the aimless force of the unruly elements.

"If aught could drive me to despair, 'twere truly  
The aimless force of elements unruly.  
Let that high joy be mine for evermore,  
To shut the lordly ocean from the shore,

'The watery waste to limit and to bar,  
And push it back upon itself afar!'

Mephisto proposes to take advantage of the anarchy which arose in consequence of the frivolous abuse of the paper money and the appearance of a new claimant for the crown, and to proffer his own and Faust's services to the Emperor. Faust detests war as a destructive agency, and does not think the old Emperor worthy of support; but, in the hope of getting the sea-coast from him, and of bending Nature to the service of men, he half reluctantly, yet falling into new guilt and strengthening the fetters by which Mephisto still leads him, accepts Mephisto's advice to interfere in the war between the legitimate Emperor and the pretender, whom the old friends of the former, and specially the clergy, had elected to put down the anarchy. A battle takes place; the pretender is defeated through Mephisto's magic arts. As a reward for his services, Faust demands and obtains the sea-shore in feoff for ever, and with it the opportunity of carrying out his grand designs. *"It is as a ruler of a free and happy people that Faust is to reach the highest possibility of human existence, and to*

*enfold the vast inner wealth which he has been storing during his long æsthetic and moral apprenticeship."* The act which gives a satirical picture of the Bourbon Kings of France, of the decayed anarchical condition of the old German Empire, and the way war was waged by the famous Austrian "War Council," winds up with a hard hit at the clergy. Faust, who has done most, gets but little, and that little before it is something is burdened with tithes and church-rates; those who had done nothing—on the contrary, who had abetted the Emperor's adversaries—get all the Emperor has to give, under the hypocritical pretext of saving his and Faust's, the magician's, soul.

#### ACT V.

A long time has again elapsed; Faust, according to Goethe's own statement, supposed to be 100 years old, has carried out his great plan—he has subdued the ocean, dug canals to facilitate trade and travel, and opened the realm to foreign commerce. Faust's physical strength is unbroken, and his intellect is active. Faust has become from an eudemonist, to whom enjoyment is the

very goal of life, a man of useful activity; but he is still selfish, self-willed, passionate, and not just. An aged couple own a cottage on a hill near the shore. Faust wants their home to replace it by a watch-tower; he has repeatedly tried to persuade them to sell it or to exchange it for a larger and more valuable property, but these representatives of the respectable conservative element of society, stubbornly refused to listen to his proposals. Faust grows tired of being just, and, abetted by Mephisto, gives the command to oust "Philemon and Baucis" from their inheritance. Mephisto carries out the errand in his brutal way. Philemon and Baucis resist; in the confusion of the fray the house catches fire, and the old people die of fright, whilst a traveller, whom they had rescued from the waves, is dispatched in defending them. When Faust hears of the old people's death, he curses the violent deed, for which he disclaims all responsibility, having wished for exchange, not for robbery; yet Faust's impatience and selfishness are the cause of their destruction.

Standing at midnight on his balcony, and gazing regretfully at the smoking ruins, he sees

four phantom women rising from the flickering remnants and swooping upon him: *Care, Want, Distress, Guilt*. Faust retires into the palace. Care steals in through the keyhole; the others keep circling about the abode of Faust, but cannot gain entrance: Want and Distress, because he is a rich man—Guilt, because he is a mighty man. But Care, the companion of every mortal, be he high or low, comes, according to the parting words of Want, Distress, and Guilt, to Faust, to prepare the way for her brother Death. Shivering at the view of the four phantoms, Faust acknowledges having not yet made good his liberty, not yet fought his way to perfect freedom of mind. He regrets that, instead of trusting in the slow and healthy process of Nature, he had resorted to the aid of magic, cursed the world, and leagued himself with supernatural powers. Now, as the crowning glory of his life stands before him, the ideal of pure and free humanity—

“Stood I, O Nature! Man alone in thee,  
Then were it worth one's while a man to be.”

But he who once has played with magical powers and superstitions is at their mercy to his end.

Faust trembles when he hears the door jarring ; but, although angry with Care, who declines to answer his question, he composes himself, and abstains from using as in olden times a word of sorcery, a curse, to get rid of his anger. Now Care reveals herself as Care, and asks if he had not already known her. He answers : Having only rushed through life, he had not given to her an opportunity of laying hold of him ; besides this, he did not care for future life, the one great anxiety of the ordinary people, being himself fully resigned to and satisfied with this world :

“The sphere of earth is known enough to me ;  
 The view beyond is barred immutably ;  
 A fool, who there his blinking eyes directeth,  
 And o’er his clouds of peers a place expecteth !  
 Firm let him stand, and look around him well !  
 This world means something to the capable,  
 Why needs he through eternity to wend ?  
 He here acquires what he can apprehend.  
 Thus let him wander down his earthly day ;  
 When spirits haunt, go quietly his way ;  
 In marching onwards, bliss and torment find,  
 Though, every moment, with unsated mind.”

But Care, having taken possession of his heart, will not give way. She gives a picture of her terrible sway over man’s mind :

“Whom I once possess shall never  
 Find the world worth his endeavour :

Endless gloom around him folding,  
Rise nor set of sun beholding,  
Perfect in external senses,  
Inwardly his darkness dense is ;  
And he knows not how to measure  
True possession of his treasure.  
Luck and ill become caprices ;  
Still he starves in all increases ;  
Be it happiness or sorrow,  
He postpones it till the morrow ;  
To the future only cleaveth  
Nothing, therefore, he achieveth.

Faust, feeling her befooling power, interrupts her ; but she continues depicting the man, whom she possesses, in a pitiless way :

“ Shall he go or come ? How guide him ?  
Prompt decision is denied him ;  
Midway on the trodden highway  
Halting, he attempts a by-way ;  
Ever more astray, bemisted,  
Everything beholding twisted  
Burdening himself and others,  
Taking breath, he chokes and smothers,  
Though not choked, in life not sharing,  
Not resigned and not despairing !  
Such incessant rolling, spinning,  
Painful quitting, hard beginning,  
Now constraint, now liberation,  
Semi-sleep, poor recreation,  
Firmly in his place insnare him,  
And, at last, for hell prepare him.”

Faust, fearing for the sanity of his senses and mind, opposes his strong manly will to her. He



knows demons have just as much power over man's mind as man allows them to have. To this calm clear reason, Care must yield ; but parting, she breathes upon his eyes and blinds Faust, thus justly avenging by blindness Faust's selfish desire for a station on the aged couple's hill whence to overlook his land and work. Nevertheless his courage is undaunted, for he is another man. Faust, become blind, finds a clearer light dawning upon his spirit. Has care driven him once nearly mad, nearly to commit suicide,—now he overcomes even the natural fetter of age, blindness ; the great undertaking, the definite goal of his life, leaves him no rest—he must press it onward while it is yet time—he drops his own care with care for others, the suffering of age in unselfish activity for his surrounding people. “He had begun his career with Titanic yearning for the unattainable, with impatient contempt for the narrowness of the human lot, with wild endeavours to overleap the limits of Nature. Now that which once he esteemed to be nothing, has assumed an ideal value and beauty in his eyes. To be a man is to him in this moment more than to be a god.” His interest in

humanity has raised before him a new ideal of happiness, shedding a new glory upon his existence. In this mood of mind he calls upon his serfs, man by man.

“Up from your couches, vassals ! man by man,  
Make grandly visible my daring plan !  
Seize now your tools, with spade and shovel press !  
The work traced out must be a swift success.  
Quick diligence, severest ordering,  
The most superb reward shall bring ;  
And that the mighty work completed stands,  
One mind suffices for a thousand hands.”

This manly and resolute philosophy of life drives not only care away, but helps him to get over the natural weakness of age. But Mephisto, knowing that the end must now soon come, has summoned to his aid a host of lemures, infernal phantoms, and orders them to dig Faust's grave. The old man, hearing the clashing of the spades, is reminded of his great work, and comes out to give directions. A marshy plain still breathes pestilence, and makes long tracts of land uninhabitable ; to drain this has long been his desire, and giving now his decisive orders, he already sees in spirit the prosperity which will spring up, instead of barrenness and desolation. He gives free vent to his imagination, the future unrolls itself

before him, showing him in prophetic anticipation the blessed results of his labour—not to himself but to generations unborn. He sees a free people living in a free land, not in slothful security and in degrading self-enjoyment, like the despotic society depicted in the first act of the second part, but girt about with danger which will ever arouse their best energies, and keep them active and vigilant.

“To many millions let me furnish soil,  
 Though not secure, yet free to active toil;  
 Green, fertile fields, where men and herds go forth  
 At once with comfort on the newest earth,  
 And swiftly settled on the hill's firm base,  
 Created by the bold, industrious race.  
 A land like paradise here, round about :  
 Up to the brink the tide may roar without,  
 And though it gnaw, to burst with force the limit,  
 By common impulse all unite to hem it.  
 Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence ;  
 The last result of wisdom stamps it true :  
 He only earns his freedom and existence,  
 Who daily conquers them anew.  
 Thus here, by dangers girt, shall glide away  
 Of childhood, manhood, age, the vigorous day :  
 And such a throng I fain would see  
 Stand on free soil among a people free !  
 Then dared I hail the moment fleeing,  
*Ah, still delay—thou art so fair !*  
 The traces cannot, of mine earthly being,  
 In æons perish—they are there !

In proud fore-feeling of such lofty bliss  
I now enjoy the highest moment—This !”

Faust has spoken the fatal word, the pact according to the letter is fulfilled, though not to its spirit, as Mephisto himself acknowledges, with these words :

“No joy could sate him, and suffice no bliss;  
To catch but shifting shapes was his endeavour.”

Faust falls dead to the ground, and the lemures bury his mortal remains. According to the letter, Mephisto has won his wager, while in reality he has lost it; the wager had stipulated that when Faust, on an idler's couch, should self-satisfied stretch himself in quiet, when the devil should have beguiled him with lying flatteries and befooled him with rich enjoyments until, self-pleased, he should have lost all strength for higher aspirations, *then, and not until then, should he belong to his enemy*. Instead of subjugating Faust's mighty soul, Mephisto has been subjugated by it—the moment of highest bliss did not come through Mephisto's agency, but in spite of him; not by sensual gratification, but through a pure exalted joy at the blessings which would flow to

Faust's fellow-creatures from his unselfish activity. From an eudemonist, a seeker for selfish happiness, he has grown gradually to an altruist, a high-minded labourer for the common good; and the conclusion is that, according to Goethe, man is capable, without supernatural interference, of working out his moral and intellectual gifts, and, shall we add, with the majority of German commentators, *his own redemption from guilt and sin, his own salvation also?* This last question is answered by the concluding scene, which these commentators reject as unworthy of Goethe's genius. It is true, in its character this scene is wholly symbolical and mythological like the classical Walpurgis Night. But as the Greek mythological figures are the drapery of a real idea—the idea of the beautiful—as the highest human attribute with regenerating power, so the Christian mythological figures are the symbols of *the real Christian idea of self-sacrificing activity and highest aspirations crowned by grace, by eternal love.*

Faust when he dies is not yet free from guilt and earthly remnants, not yet saved; but through his ever striving to the highest goal he

is *capable of redemption and salvation*. Faust can be saved, because his whole life, with all its errors and obscure aspirations, has had a steady upward tendency. Faust can no more go to the infernal regions "than a balloon loaded with some rarefied gas could sink towards the earth;" and the closing scene shows us the *Human in its process of definite union with the Divine through redemption by saving grace*.

Mephisto, although believing that he had won the wager, is nevertheless, with respect to the old doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, which he declares to be a modern and utterly heterodox doctrine, but also with regard to the modern ideas of soul and death, full of apprehensions of losing Faust's soul, and summons all his subordinates to assist him in preventing its escape; he exhorts them to be on their watch with outstretched arms and sharp claws; but, of a sudden, heavenly hosts appear to protect Faust from their clutches. The representatives of hell fly before the representatives of eternal love, they cannot stand the breath of eternal love (roses), they plunge headforemost in the jaws of hell, leaving Mephisto alone, and even he, the incar-

nation of baseness, coarseness, and irreverence, becomes so enamoured with the angels' beauty that he retires from Faust's grave, and the angels, taking advantage of his attack of senseless passion for them, snatch from him the soul of Faust. Mephisto, ashamed of having been cheated and outwitted in his old days, and of having lost, through his own fault and mismanagement, the high soul, pledged and promised to him, plunges too, full of despair, into the infernal abyss, which closes behind him. The rest of the scene exhibits, according to Schnetger's remark, a universal upward movement of loving natures, to whom loving natures offer their hands, so that we have a long chain, the lowest link of which is on earth, the highest in the loftiest regions of heaven—the lowest, a man, still heavily burdened with earthly remnants and with human guilt and impurity; the highest, eternal love symbolized by the "Mater Gloriosa." It is not a heaven full of eternal inactive felicity, such as lazy piety imagines, but one of the purest loving activity. The ascending scale between the still guilty but regenerate Faust and the personification of eternal love, is symbolically

represented by the three anchorites and the various groups of angels, night (still) born children, and penitent women, which he encounters on his way. The first of the anchorites, the Pater Ecstaticus, symbolizes the communion with eternal love by self-judgment and contrition; the Pater Profundus, the communion with eternal love through God's revelation in Nature, the most dreadful outbursts of which are but heralds of God's love, and assure man that God will defeat the disorderly and rebellious elements in the moral as well as the physical world, transforming Chaos to Kosmos and Discord to Harmony.

The Pater Seraphicus and the midnight-born blessed boys represent the blessed peace which reigns in souls either purged of all earthly impurity through the purest glow of self-abnegation, or never touched by impurity, because taken away from earth in the very hour of birth, and symbolize the communion with God as promised in the words :

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

The angels, soaring over the saints' heads to higher atmospheres, bearing Faust's mortal part,



triumphantly proclaim 'his redemption and the reason of it :

“ The noble spirit now is free,  
 And saved from evil scheming ;  
 Whoe'er aspires unwearily,  
 Is not beyond redeeming.  
 And if he feels the grace of love  
 That from on high is given,  
 The blessed hosts that wait above,  
 Shall welcome him to heaven.”

In these lines, says Goethe himself, the key to Faust's rescue may be found. In Faust himself an ever higher and purer form of activity to the end, and from above the eternal love coming down to his aid. This is entirely in harmony with our religious ideas, according to which we are not alone saved by our own strength, but through the freely bestowed grace of God.

Yet the angels of perfection, answering to the triumphing song of the younger angels, who defeated Satan by their roses, declare that Faust's immortal part is not yet quite purified from the traces of its earthly career and can be purified from them by eternal love alone.

“ When every element  
 The mind's high forces,

Have seized, subdued and blent,  
No angel divorces  
Twin-natures, single grown,  
That inly mate them;  
*Eternal love alone  
Can separate them."*

His soul is, therefore, given up into the hands of the "blessed boys," that becoming a again a child, he may be not only re-born to holiness and heavenly perfection, but rise even to a higher state of spiritual perfection than is possible for those whose goodness is only innocent simplicity and ignorance of evil.

Dr. Marianus, whose only aim is to fathom the mystery of eternal love symbolized in the Blessed Virgin, announces in jubilant tunes the approach of the "Mater Gloriosa." She comes soaring into space followed by a host of penitent women, who, reminding her of the forgiveness they themselves received in consequence of her deep heartfelt penitence, pray for pardon for one—

"Who but once forgot transgressing,  
Who her loving error saw not."

Margaret sees her full pardon in the Virgin's face before it is spoken, and the prayer which was a despairing cry for help in the hour of

bitterest agony, becomes now a strain of unutterable joy—

“Incline, O maiden,  
With mercy laden,  
In light unfading,  
Thy gracious countenance upon my bliss;  
My loved, my lover,  
His trials over  
In yonder world, returns to me in this.”

The blessed boys approach, bearing Faust's eternal part already overtowering them, as it grows into consciousness of the new being, and Margaret, now an inspired soul, sees the beauty and glory of the original nature of Faust, redeemed from its earthly disguise, and shining in eternal youth and perfection.

Dr. Marianus exhorts the whole host to give themselves up entirely to the Blessed Virgin, and by doing so to be recreated to eternal bliss. The “chorus mysticus” in the closing lines connects the heavenly with the earthly sphere, by suggesting the relation of the two.

All that is transitory (the whole visible world) is only a symbol of the invisible eternal world, the inadequate or insufficient (the moral perfection) here (in heaven) becomes event,

reality. The indescribable (eternal bliss in communion with eternal love) here it is done, a fact. The eternally-womanly, the woman-soul, in which to man the all-uplifting and all-redeeming love is revealed in its most pure and perfect form, draws us on and upwards, as Margaret draws the soul of Faust up to the eternal love. Thus the transitory love of earth is only a symbol of the Divine One, the possibilities of love, which earth can never fulfil, become realities in the higher life which follows, and the means which lift us men up to this higher world is love realized in pure woman's heart—

“ All things transitory,  
But as symbols are sent;  
Earth's insufficiency,  
Here grows to event.  
The Indescribable,  
Here it is done;  
The woman's soul leadeth us  
Upward and on.”

“ All we see before us passing,  
Sign and symbol is alone;  
Here what thought could never reach to,  
Is by semblances made known.  
What men's words may never utter,  
Done in act in symbols shown;  
Love whose perfect type is woman,  
The divine and human blending;

Love for ever and for ever,  
 Wins us onward still ascending."  
 (Anster.)

And now

### WHAT IS THE LEADING THOUGHT

of this earth and heaven compassing poem? It is the eternal struggle between the ideal godly nature of men, and his sensuous, selfish, cynical being, the unavoidable guilt he is ensnared in by the struggle, and the, therefore, absolutely necessary redemption of man, the proof and pledge of the immortality of the eternal better nature of man in spite of the heaven obscuring sin and guilt, through defeating and overpowering of which man alone can rise to the highest degree of his moral and intellectual development to the victory of the ideal world of sin and evil. And what is *the fountain of life and bliss* in which the aspiring soul can quench hunger and thirst after real bliss and happiness?

Is it *science, knowledge*? No! Man will never be able to detect the inmost force which binds the world, and guides his course; we can recognize it only in his reflex in Nature, history, and our own mind.

*Is it sensuous enjoyment*, quenching the fervours of glowing passions, by plunging in depths of sensual pleasures? No! Sensuous enjoyment debases, degrades, leads from fall to fall, from guilt to guilt.

*Are they starbright meteors of ambitious heaven?* The splendours of high life, influence, and power over the minds of mighty ones? No! We are always deceived, and at last, disgusted by a world whose principle is egoism and frivolity, to which wealth is but the means of frivolous indulgence, and by which art and poetry are degraded, by being taken but for an object of mere stage exhibition and shallow frivolous amusement.

*Is it art and poetry?* Is it the realization of the ideal of beauty in it? No! To the active man, in the strength of his manhood, the pursuit of the beautiful is not a final goal, but an educational process, which, if it is healthy and sound, has to determinate in raising men from the æsthetic world into the world of moral feeling and action.

*Is it power and estate?* No and yes. As long as a man wields power and possesses real

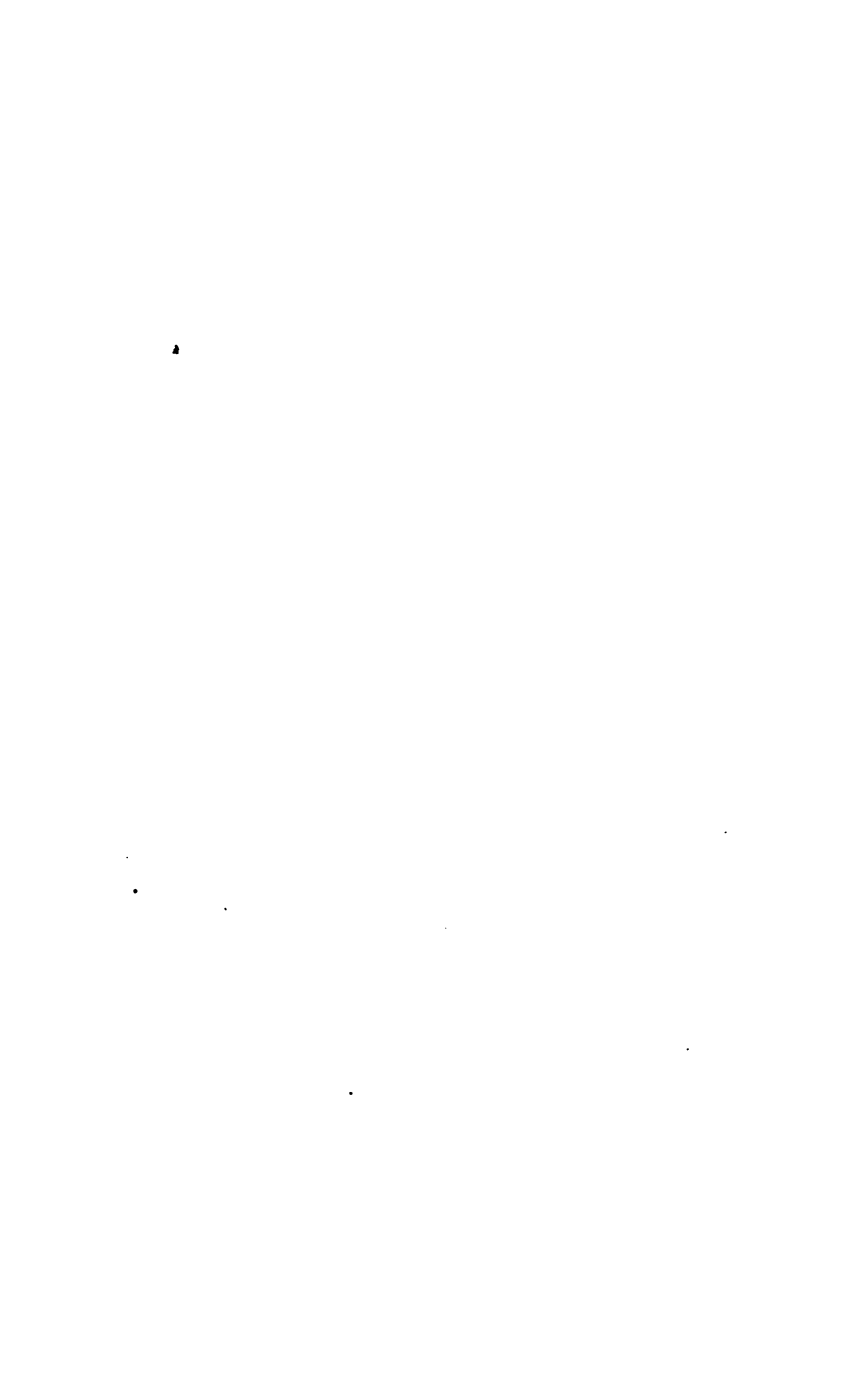
wealth but to satisfy his own selfish inclinations, or to win glory, he is always in danger of being unjust and hard, and of being beguiled into guilt; but as soon as he rises to the height of Christian morals, realized in Christ's life and proclaimed in His word (Mark x. 45): The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life for many; then power and wealth are the highest blessings as means to do good, not to himself, but to his fellow-creatures, and to unborn generations, by helping to develop selfish and frivolous human society to a free people on free ground, by implanting the ideal world, realized in our own breast after a lifelong struggle, in the breast of the future generation, and thus furthering the kingdom of heaven, which is not only a world beyond this earth, but the gradual realization of love, freedom, and righteousness on this earth. This is real bliss—this satisfaction in life and death. Such a man can be saved, not because he was perfect or without guilt, but because his aspirations and exertions aimed at the highest human goal to the last; because he has kept *faith*, in spite of the faults and weaknesses which were, in

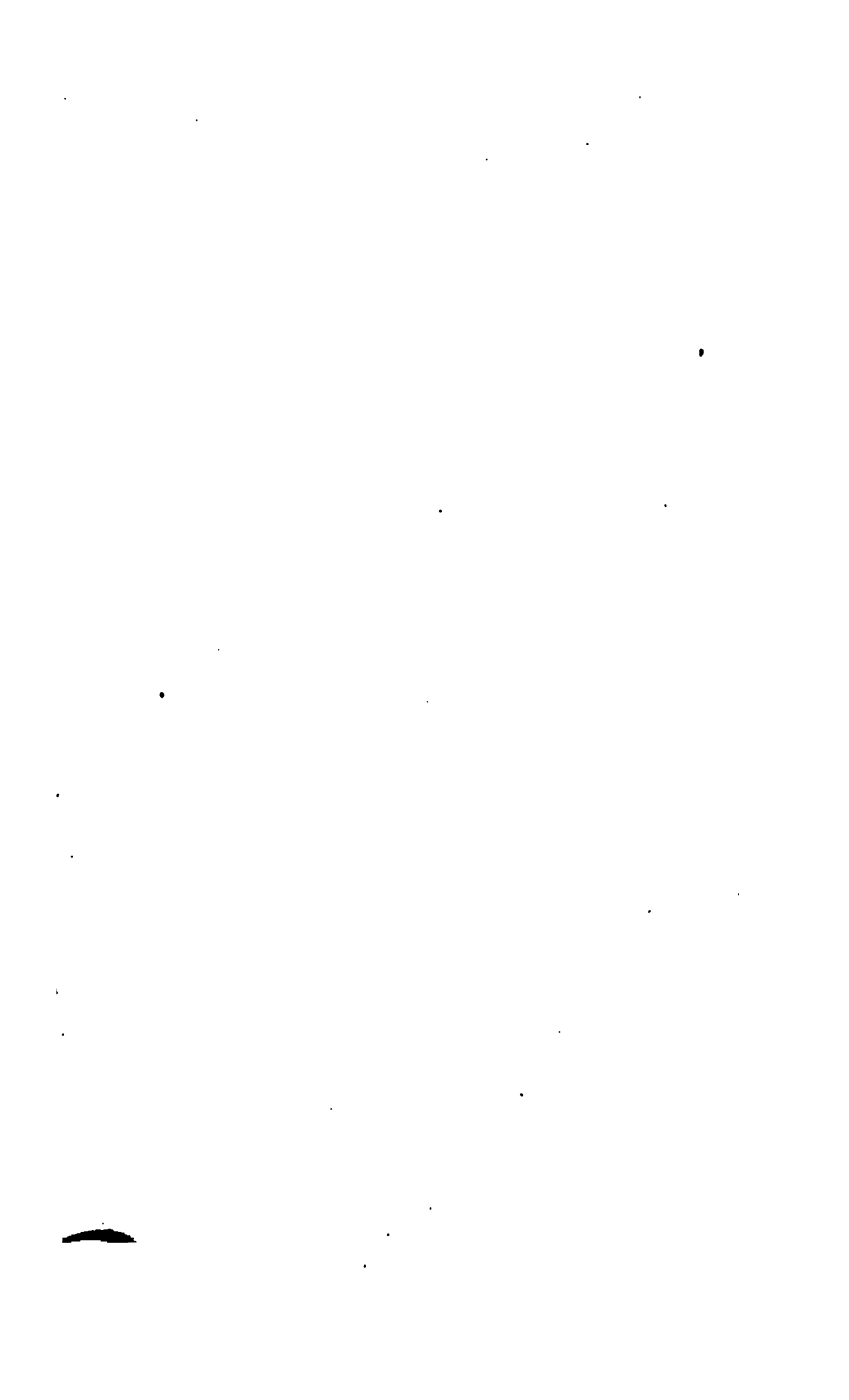
consequence of his never faltering aspirations, but transitional states bearing in themselves the germ and promise of something nobler and better ; the *faith* through which we are saved by grace, by eternal love ; the *faith* which, in woman, is devotion and confidence—in man, exertion to realize the eternal ideals revealed by God in man, especially in the Son of Man. Thus I venture to say Goethe's "Faust" is not only in its poetical composition inspired by Scriptural models—the Book of Job and the temptation of our Lord—but also that, notwithstanding that the poem in its first conception was planned in a decided anti-Christian spirit, Goethe, by-and-by, developed himself to more Christian ideas, as is proved by the closing scene, although he vents to the last his animosity against the clergy and its dogmas. I cannot agree with Loepar, who says that the whole poem is based on the belief in a personal god, responsibility of the individual, and the immortality of the soul. Goethe's conception of *God* savours very much of Spinozism : the *responsibility* of the individual is, as the beginning of the second part and the exclusion of guilt in the last act shows, very limited.



According to Goethe mere sinning is not guilt—sticking to sin, pleasure in sin, constitutes guilt ; and Goethe's belief in a *future life* is very vague, hinting, on more than one occasion, that a strong independent individuality may preserve its "entelechie," its actual distinct being and power, while the mass of persons in whom the human elements are comparatively formless, will continue to exist only in these elements. But there is not the least doubt that Goethe agreed with the *highest moral*, and with the *central religious idea* of, Christian thought—that *the only true satisfaction in life is not to live to ourselves, but for our fellow creatures, and that man is saved not only by his own merit, but through the freely bestowed grace of God.*

And thus Faust may be proclaimed as the *gospel of a Christian Pantheism*, combining, free from any dogmatic fetters, the regenerating and saving ideas of old and modern humanity.





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